

## Current Topics

### The Kiowa Ghost Dance.

Under ordinary circumstances news that an Indian tribe is indulging in the wild frenzy known as the ghost dance is enough to call up visions of murder and rapine. In past days numerous murderous raids of the red men have been preceded by such festivals. But a ghost dance now being held in the Wichita and Kiowa reservations of Indian territory is not believed to presage any such terrible scenes. The reservations named are to be opened to white settlers when the allotment of lands to Indians shall have been completed, and the red men fear that once the paleface goes in among them the days of tribal power will have been numbered. With the view of preventing the impending incursion these older chiefs have organized the

### Say Mrs. Cruger Is to Wed.

From Italy come rumors that Mrs. Van Rensselaer Cruger is engaged to marry a wealthy young Bostonian named Gardner, and New York society is pleased thereat.

Before the death of her husband Mrs. Cruger fell into the habit of writing short stories and novels, which dealt wholly with society, and for which publishers eagerly bid. It was then she came as near founding a salon as was possible in New York. Her houses at Oyster Bay and in the city were the rendezvous of persons of both sexes with literary and artistic tastes.

After the death of Mr. Cruger and the discovery that wealth was not hers, Mrs. Cruger dipped deeper into the stream of light fiction, and under the nom de plume of "Julian Gordon" wrote cleverer sketches than ever. Then came the desire to live abroad and for the past year or more Mrs. Cruger has occupied a charming villa in Florence.

### A Galveston Hero.

There are few men in Texas with such a well developed propensity for getting into disagreeable jobs as Col. Hunt McCaleb, who was adjutant general of the city forces when Galveston was under martial law. When Gen. Thomas Scurry was appointed to the military command of the city by Mayor Jones he at once offered the appointment of adjutant general to Col. McCaleb. Why he did so nobody appeared to know, for McCaleb is not popular. In normal times he is an unassuming newspaper plodder of the most ordinary stripe. But he seems fairly to revel in a row, and perhaps that is why Gen. Scurry appointed him to the responsible position of adjutant general, and gave into his hands the work of managing the great mass of detail which devolved upon the military government.

There was no law to guide him save common sense, and, according to his story, when he needed a law right badly to cover a case which presented itself at the adjutant general's office,

### He Stole \$700,000.

Cornelius L. Alvord, note teller in the First National bank of New York, 2 Wall street, has stolen \$700,000 of the bank's funds and has absconded. The bank's officers positively deny that anyone in the bank or that any of its depositors was in collusion with Alvord. He had been twenty years in the bank's employ, six years as its note teller, and had the implicit confidence of its officers. It is probable that Alvord lost the greater part of the money he stole in speculating in the street, at the very entrance to which he handled millions of dollars. George F. Baker, president of the bank, has issued this statement:

"The aggregate of the false entries, amounting to \$700,000, has been charged off on the books of the bank, out of the reserve fund, without diminishing the surplus, and profits of the bank as reported in its last published statement. It is expected that the shortage will be materially reduced by a substantial sum, of which there is a fair prospect of recovery."

Sig. Gallo, the new Italian minister of public instruction, is being criticised by the German press because he has eliminated the study of German from the curriculum of the intermediate schools. That language was introduced in the Italian schools by Sig. Baccelli, Gallo's predecessor. The German papers assert that Italy's commercial relations with Germany, Austria, and Switzerland are becoming closer year by year, and that the German tongue is necessary to Italians.

### New Count Coming.

Baron Von Sternberg, who has been first secretary to the German embassy here for several years, has been transferred to a new post and will be succeeded by Count Quadt, who has just arrived and is now looking for a suitable residence. Count Quadt has spent his life in the German diplomatic service and is a man of great wealth and social inclination. The Countess Quadt is a daughter of Signor Martino, the Italian ambassador to Denmark.

The late Lord Russell once presided at a dinner given to Sir Henry Irving on the latter's return from America. While the dinner was in progress Lord Russell suggested that Comyns Carr propose Sir Henry's health. "I can't make speeches, you know," said he. Sir Henry gently replied: "I heard you make a fine speech before the Parnell commission." To which the puny Irishman answered: "Oh, yes, but then I had something to talk about."

## MADE SEWING EASY.

BUT SCANT HONOR IS DENIED HIS MEMORY.

Elias Howe Failed of Election to the Hall of Fame in the University of New York—Chief Justice Against Him.

Chancellor McCracken of the University of New York requests that the following be published:

"By reason of a clerical error (the misreading of a single figure) in our canvass of the reports of the 100 electors of the Hall of Fame, fifty-three votes were credited to Elias Howe instead of forty-seven. Seventeen chief justices were recorded as supporting him, when the number was eleven. Failing, therefore, to receive fifty-one votes, his name is not included among those to be inscribed this present year. This reduces the roll of names to twenty-nine and leaves twenty-one vacant panels to be filled two years hence, in 1902. The official count will be published in a few weeks, in the book of the Hall of Fame. In a few instances the figures may vary slightly from those published in the public prints, but the roll of twenty-nine names is now assured."

Elias Howe was the inventor of the sewing machine. He was born at

to indicate. A woman may cultivate manner and self-control to such an extent that her real personality and instincts may be kept from the eyes of most observers. But her thumb is her betrayer. It is the one member that she forgets to keep under strict surveillance. And it speaks frankly. When I am collecting money for my philanthropy and I meet a patron who discusses the subject with her thumb held close against her forefinger I do not ask her for a contribution, for I know that she is selfish and unwilling to part with a donation. If, on the contrary, the thumb stands out with a heroic nonchalance, I know that the owner is open for sympathy, and will help if she can. Even if she cannot, her answer will be truthful. I do not think that I ever have met an exception to veracity in the right sort of thumb. But I never place any reliance upon the word of a woman whose thumb closes inside of her palm as she speaks, or who makes a fist by letting the fingers cover the thumb. She is deceptive, insincere, and often cowardly. In a man this retirement of the thumb expresses weakness, too. Notice it when acquaintances or friends shake hands with you. If women think that a bravely extended thumb is obtrusive or inartistic they should disabuse their minds of the idea, for they are placing a class upon themselves that they do not deserve when they check the thumb in its free expression. When a woman manifests nervousness on a club platform I look at her thumb to know the cause. And when she utters a particularly lofty or noble sentiment I glance again at her thumb to know whether she meant it. This has been one of the most important aids that I have used with success in studying the colored people.

### Navigation on Illinois River.

Although there are many steamers on the Illinois river, most of them are in local trade on the various pools, and few pass through the locks. A fee of \$1.50 per vessel and a toll on cargo is charged at each dam. The receipts at Henry last year were \$1,101.11, and the expense of maintaining \$1,376.05. At Copperas Creek \$1,761.66 was collected to offset an expenditure of \$2,114.13. But a single vessel regularly passes the Henry lock at present, the Borealis Rex of the Royal route, Capt. Swain. This steamer makes regular daily round trips between LaSalle and Henry loaded to the guns with freight and passengers, and is said to have cleared nearly \$10,000 above all expenses this season. A new steamer, the Fred Swain, has been built to run opposite to it, and many more boats are projected in consequence of the deep water and booming trade. Another steamer, the Bald Eagle, runs from Peoria to St. Louis. In addition to these grain boats, yachts and excursion steamers pass at intervals, and this year the expense sheets at the locks will probably show a considerable profit to the state.—John L. Mathews, in Chicago Record.

### To Raise the Kangaroo.

A movement has been started in France which has for its purpose the preservation, or, rather, the cultivation of the kangaroo, which has been rapidly proceeding toward extermination. Dr. Brisson, a French surgeon, says that there is likely soon to be an exceptional demand for the animals in consequence of the success attending the use of the kangaroo tendon in the hospitals. It has been employed in scores of instances to tie up the fractured bones of a man's leg, in order that he may use his knees while the bones are knitting together. Kangaroo tendon, he says, is as strong as silver wire. It is taken from the tail, and being animal in its nature is absorbed, and the leg does not have to be cut open, as is necessary when silver wire is used.

This year has continued the greatest season in the history of lake traffic.

### CHARACTER IN THUMBS.

The Way They Are Held Is a Guide to Observers.

There are many who judge of the character of individuals by the expression and setting of the eye, the shape and character of the nose, the conformation of the mouth, with its tell-tale corners, the looseness or tightness of the lips, but here is a woman who bases her approval or condemnation on the way women hold their thumbs, and declares that she has never been deceived in her estimate. This is Miss Mary Burk, an organized charity worker, whose remarks are quoted by the Philadelphia Daily Bulletin as follows: I gave the subject special study after I had noticed the almost infallible guide that thumbs offer to the woman who must read character. Many of the so-called signs of character may be acquired without the characteristic that they are supposed



COL. MCALEB.

he would grind one out as fast as his stenographer could work a typewriter. During the ten days of martial law forty-six general orders were issued. Gen. Scurry says they were models of military conciseness. In these forty-six orders this newspaper plodder, whom the hurricane had tossed into a position of despotic power second only to the military governor himself, gave to the town a code of laws which brought order out of chaos, defined the common law rights which would be respected and indicated in no uncertain terms the common law rights which ceased to exist under this fearful and peculiar military despotism. But more wonderful than this was the fact that the people proper, who had been governed with an iron hand and often at the muzzle of a rifle, rose up and proclaimed against the proposed abrogation of martial law. It was McCaleb who first suggested to Gen. Scurry that the time had come to get back to civil government. As the adjutant general had been in the closest touch with the people, Gen. Scurry placed great store on his opinion. He saw the correctness of it, and told the mayor that martial law must cease, and in twenty-four hours the machinery of civil process was again in motion.

### The Right to Hiss.

A Kansas City judge has laid down a new canon in theatrical criticism. Two men at the Standard theater in that city who did not like the performance expressed their disapproval by hissing. They were arrested and fined, the court deciding that while every citizen has the right to indulge in criticism, he has no right to disturb the enjoyment of others. The learned judge apparently did not remember that persons sometimes applaud and usually applaud in the wrong time, which disturbs many persons. The two victims ought to go to Paris, where recently an audience, displeased with the performance, broke the windows and chairs and wound up by turning a hose on the performers. There are many occasions when an audience feels like turning on the hose, but Paris is the only place where this luxury is enjoyed.



ELIAS HOWE.

Spencer, Mass., July 9, 1819, and died at Brooklyn, Oct. 3, 1867. He was the son of a farmer and miller, and his only education was that received during the winter months, when there was no work to be done on the farm. In 1837 he drifted to Boston, and secured employment in the shop of a machinist. Here he conceived the idea of the sewing machine, and spent five years in perfecting it.

On Sept. 10, 1846, he was given his first patent, but he could not sell the machine because of the opposition of the artisan class to labor-saving appliances. Next he went to England, and, failing there to interest capital in his invention, he returned to America, working his passage as a common sailor. While he was abroad his machine had been imitated and was selling everywhere. Capital now came to his aid, and in a short time his income had increased from \$300 to \$200,000 a year. He cleared up on his invention about \$2,000,000.



## SCIENCE AND PROGRESS

Speculation as to the composition and surroundings of the sun and its corona has run on many lines, but there have been very few investigators who have suspected the existence of dark bodies in such a neighborhood. Such suspicions have existed, but there has been very little to support them until the recent eclipse. Skepticism on the point was fully justified until the fact was definitely and clearly ascertained, since in the case of an object so brilliant as the corona it was so easy to mistake a mere interval between two bright structures for a dark one, and this objection applies even to the photograph. It is to the photograph, however, that we owe our knowledge that dark bodies do exist in the vicinity of the sun and its corona.

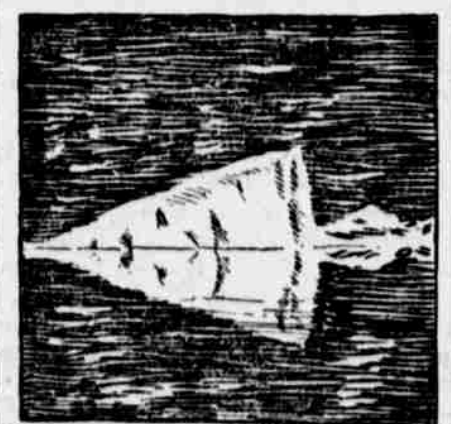
The discovery appears to be due to the existence of a light which is not that of the corona, but a faint, diffused light due to the scattering of other light by minute particles, and it is by their showing against this gleam that we are able to convince ourselves of the existence of the dark bodies. What they mean at present men of science do not know and at present have no means of ascertaining. Significance of some sort they must have and to the solution of this problem our astronomers will doubtless address themselves with that mixture of enthusiasm and patience which has given to the world so many notable discoveries. Prolonged exposure of the plates has been the means by which Mr. Maunder has clearly demonstrated that these dark structures possess an actual existence and are not mere effects of contrast, as was suggested with regard to the negatives taken by Mr. Wesley as far back as 1871. The dark rays are of no small extent, one of them coming to an abrupt end at about 500,000 miles from the edge of the sun, and another bordering on a bright streamer is even longer than its companion. The discovery is important even on the ground that it adds a new element to the inexhaustible romance of science.

### Sea Currents and Migrations.

The French scientific journal, La Nature, calls attention to a recent report of the French consul at Hawaii, which, it thinks, throws light on some problems of ethnography. Not long ago a little schooner, dismantled and its rudder gone as the result of a tempest, was drifted by winds and ocean currents from Tahiti to Hawaii, after eighty-one days of helpless wandering. Hawaiian traditions declare that in ancient days people came from Tahiti, drifting with the currents, and settled in Hawaii. The adventure of the dismantled schooner seems to prove the possibility of such a migration, and it is suggested that the currents of the Pacific, which have not yet been sufficiently studied, may throw light on the distribution of the native races among the island groups.

### TURN THIS SIDEWAYS.

If you follow the advice you will be startled by the sudden apparition of



a water god's smiling face. This, moreover, is not a "freak," but a genuine and curious case of extraordinary reflection in still water. The picture was taken at Willoughby lake, a summer resort in Vermont, and the reflection is called locally Devil's Face.

### Harvard's Great Electric Plant.

Prof. John Trowbridge has recently had installed at Harvard university the most powerful apparatus in the world for the production of electro-motive force. The plant comprises 20,000 storage cells giving 40,000 electrical units of pressure, and this can be increased to 3,000,000 volts. But in order to obtain the full effect of so enormous a pressure, Prof. Trowbridge says it would be necessary to remove the apparatus into the center of an open field and elevate it at least thirty feet from the ground in order to avoid loss from the inductive action of floors and walls. With this great battery the highest degree of instantaneous temperature yet attained can be produced. Prof. Trowbridge hopes with its aid to obtain some clue to the temperature at which hydrogen exists in the stars. This plant furnishes, he adds, an ideal method of producing X-rays.

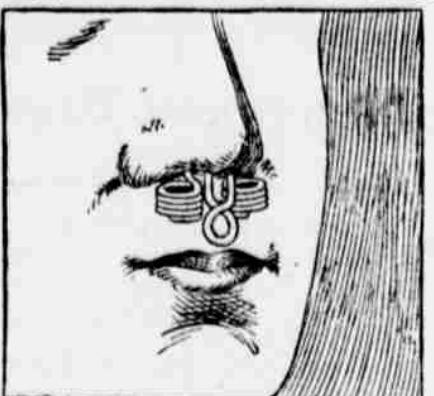
### Cultivated Roosters.

The village of Brackel in Belgium enjoys the fame of having originated one of the most celebrated races of domestic fowls. The Belgians do not hesitate to assert that the Brackel hens are unequalled for the excellence

and number of their eggs, while the roosters have developed, thanks to generations of cultivation and the influence of "crowing tournaments," a power and rhythm of voice equally unrivaled. The breeders have a theory that the musical contests in which the Brackel roosters are trained serve to develop the peculiar qualities of the race. However this may be, it is certain the cultivation has differentiated these fowls from all others.

### CURES CATARRH AT NIGHT.

Most of the cures recommended for catarrh, hay fever, etc., require considerable care and routine work in order to effect a cure, and the sufferer is apt to neglect a continuance of the treatment until a complete cure is effected, simply because it is "too much



trouble" to attend to the simple details. It would seem, however, that if a treatment was provided that could be applied at night, when it would not interfere with the daily duties or require attention at stated hours, it would have much to recommend its use. The inhaler shown above is so constructed as to be readily attached to the nose, and that, too, without a sufficient pressure on the cartilage to cause annoyance or interfere with restful sleep. The device consists of two absorbent pads connected by a wire spring, the latter bent to a shape convenient for attachment to the central cartilage of the nose. The inventor claims that if a sufferer from catarrh, asthma, bronchitis and other diseases of the nasal passages and throat will apply this device at night a cure will be shortly effected, the medicine doing its work at the hours when diseases of the head and throat make their most formidable strides.

### Harnessing a Waterfall.

The harnessing of one of Sweden's large waterfalls has just been accomplished. The water power lies at Quarnsveden and the electric current is conveyed to Domnarveter, about three miles distant. The power station, generators, cables and transformers are all from German houses. For conveying this current 46,000 pounds of copper wire is used. The waterfall, which is one of the most powerful and continuous in the kingdom, is estimated to contain 18,000 horse power, 8,000 of which is utilized to operate the saw-mills of the company, while 10,000 is used for the generation of the electric current.

### Sunshine and Sugar.

The experiments of the French grape growers in Algeria have shown that too much sunshine is unfavorable for the making of good wine. In the more temperate climate of France grapes possess a proper proportion of sugar to acid for wine making, but the hot Algerian sunshine induces so active an assimilation by the vines that the quantity of acid is reduced and that of sugar increased. In consequence the wine makers of Algeria are driven to many devices for improving the flavor and lasting qualities of their wines.

### Have Insects Favorite Colors.

It has been asserted that insects are particularly attracted by the colors of certain flowers. Felix Plateau, after investigating the conduct of insects in their visits to various flowers, concludes that while they may perceive colors and thus be enabled to distinguish, at a distance, between flowers and leaves, yet they show no preferences among the different colors. Blue, red, yellow, white are indifferent to them. He thinks that the order of flowers affects insects more than their colors do.

### Aluminum for Soldering Rails.

Among the uses recently found for aluminum is the soldering of iron rails end to end in order to obtain a smooth, continuous track. Aluminum has the property of producing great heat in the act of combining with oxygen. The ends of the rails are placed together in a crucible filled with a mixture of aluminum and iron ore. The mixture being fired, an intense heat results, and the rails are firmly soldered together. This is said to be quite as efficacious as the electric method of soldering.

### Marine Animals Far from the Sea.

Some of the vast changes which the face of the earth has undergone are indicated by the recent discovery in the small lakes scattered among the survival of certain forms of marine animals. Salt plains exist there whose deposits were formed before volcanic forces upheaved the surrounding rocks and created mountain peaks and craters.

Few men are admired by their servants.—Montaigne.

## William L. Wilson's Career

The late William L. Wilson, who died at Lexington, Ky., recently, was born at Charlestown, W. Va., May 3, 1843. His father, who was also an educator, died when the son was a child, and the boy was educated by his mother, a woman of great culture. Mr. Wilson was graduated in 1860 from the Columbian university at Washington and for two years thereafter was a student in the University of Virginia.

At the close of the war, during which he had fought as a private on the side of the confederacy, he studied law in the Columbian university and was at the same time assistant professor of Greek and Latin in that institution.

It was at the Democratic national convention of 1880, to which he was a delegate, that Mr. Wilson made his debut in politics. Since 1871 he had been a practicing lawyer in Charlestown. But law and politics were not then as attractive to him as was educational work, and in 1882 he became president of the University of West Virginia. His election to congress, however, drew him back to the political field into which he entered this time with keen interest.

In congress he won a distinguished reputation as a scholarly, statesman-like member whose special interest in the tariff question led to his appointment to the committee on ways and means. This was in 1887. He was always a hearty supporter of Mr. Cleve-

land's policies. In the speakership fight between Crisp and Mills he took an active part. This was followed by his appointment as chairman of the ways and means committee and the Wilson bill was the result. Mr. Wilson fa-



THE LATE WILLIAM L. WILSON.

Wilson was defeated for congress, but was appointed postmaster in general at the expiration of his term in 1895. He was one of Mr. Cleveland's closest advisers, and for his judgment that President had the profoundest respect.